

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

14-133

Orleans

EAS.1314

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

Photograph



Address: 315 Samoset Road

Historic Name: Eastham Center Post Office

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Post Office

Date of Construction: ca. 1920, perhaps ca. 1910

Source: Assessor card, 1910 Barnstable Atlas

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Rear, one-car attached garage converted to dwelling space (2017)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.30 acres

Setting: This property is located in the Ponds section of central Eastham. The parcel is on the south side of Samoset Road and bounded on the left but the former railroad tracks, now a bike path. The surrounding area includes early-20th to early-21st century houses, most centered on their parcels. This house is set fairly close to the street on its level parcel. The parcel is left open around the house and is landscaped with lawn and foundation plantings. A clamshell driveway leads up to the east side of the house.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

315 SAMOSET ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The original block of this house appears to be the one-story, gable front form that is three bays wide with a centered entrance. There is a stepped down former attached garage behind this block that forms an overall deep rectangular footprint. This may be the deep rectangular building shown in the 1952 USGS photograph (Photo 4). The side-gable ell to the right (west) has a slightly higher roof. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles, and a narrow, brick chimney appears to rise from the ridge of the gable-front block. Fenestration on the gable-front block includes wood, 2/2 double-hung sash on either side of the entrance – these 2/2 windows are another clue that this may be the original portion of this house. The front entrance is shielded by a small entrance porch with rounded roof ornamented with a carved starburst pattern, and three-paned glazed side panels.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house is located just west of the Eastham Center National Register District - a small, semi-rural village cluster located near the town's geographic center. Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This house has an Assessor date of 1920. Title research traces back to a deed signed in March of 1913 but not recorded until 1920, where William Henry Nickerson of Eastham sold this 1/3-acre parcel for \$25. William Henry Nickerson was the son of Joshua Walker Nickerson (1805-1868) and his wife Mercy Walker (1804-1881), and he had inherited much of his father's farm located on the west side of the northern part of Bridge Road, and which probably included land as far north as Samoset Road.

William Henry Nickerson sold this parcel to Tamson A. Nickerson, widow of William *Horton* Nickerson, also of Eastham.¹ The deed did not reference buildings. The description of the parcel included the following: "Beginning at the northwest corner of the granted premises at the Town Road and the Station land of the Old Colony Railroad Company."

Tamson A. Clark Nickerson (1873-1945) was the widow of William Horton Nickerson (1867-1912), the son of Nathan B. and Phebe Horton Nickerson. The daughter of John A. and Tamson Clark, she had married in 1892 and had five children - Alta H., Irma C., Susan H., Abigail F, and Nathan A. - between 1892 and 1904. By 1920 she was living in the house at 295 Samoset Road (EAS.72) with her youngest children, Abby and Nathan, and running an asparagus farm. Eastham tax records for 1926 credited her with a

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 361/ Page 548.

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house (295 Samoset Road), valued at \$2000, a barn, an outbuilding, a poultry house, her 3.75-acre homestead lot, and 16.5 acres in other parcels throughout town. By 1930 both children had moved out, and Tamson Nickerson was Eastham's postmaster

In October of 1931, Tamson Nickerson sold this 1/3-acre parcel, now with reference to buildings, to Charles S. Small of Brookline. It is possible that the building referenced in that deed was the post office. This appears to be confirmed by the Eastham Tax Commitment Books. In 1932, Charles Small is first listed as owning a dwelling. The entry states "Cottage" in typeface, but next to it is handwritten "old post office." It appears this building began as a post office, perhaps built in ca. 1920 as the Assessor card sates, and it was then converted to a cottage after 1931. It should be noted that a post office is shown on the 1910 Barnstable County Atlas on the west side of the railroad tracks. It is unknown whether that is the same building that might have been moved to this location east of the tracks.

Charles Stuart Small married Jennie Wilkie in Boston in 1903. They were both born in Canada. In the 1920 census, they were living in Brookline and Charles was working as a superintendent in an office building. By 1930, Jennie was living in Brookline alone with a young son, niece and lodger, and she was working as a nurse in a convalescent home. Charles died in Canada in 1933 – perhaps he had relocated there for work, a result of the hardships in the US from the Great Depression. In 1934, his estate sold this property to Walter S. Campbell of Eastham.²

As of the 1930 census, Massachusetts-born Walter S. Campbell (1886-1965) was living in a rented house in Worcester with his Swedish-born wife, Augusta (Brusk). They do not appear to have had any children. He was working as a salesman in the "Provision" industry in Worcester. After moving to Samoset Road, he was listed as a laborer in the 1940 census, and a house painter in the house building industry as of the 1950 census – an industry that employed many men in Eastham.

A year after Walter Campbell died, his estate sold this property to John R. and Eileen (Cook) Davis of Northboro in Worcester County.³ John Davis, a decorated WWII veteran, worked for 45 years for Wyman-Gordon in Worcester as a quality inspector. They sold this property in 1999 to Stephen and Nancy Grigas of Millbury, also in Worcester County.⁴ In 2015, they were still living in Millbury when they sold this property to Nipon and Jolanda Sribanpot, then of West Hartford, CT, now of Eastham.⁵

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² Book 502/ Page 542.

³ Book 1340/ Page 712.

⁴ Book 12489/ Page 180.

⁵ Book 29353/ Page 350.

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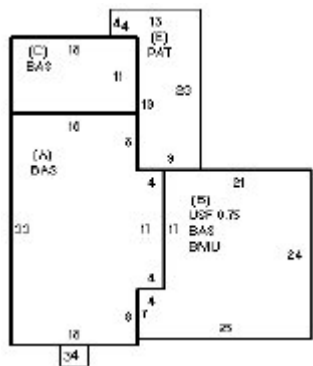


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View from Samoset Road, looking southwest.